



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2021

21-142

DOH: COVID-19 far deadlier than influenza

Vaccination critical to protect against both illnesses

HONOLULU – Dr. Sarah Kemble, Hawai'i Department of Health state epidemiologist, released the following statement on mortality rates involving COVID-19 and influenza:

"In Hawai'i and around the world, COVID-19 was far deadlier than the flu during the 2020-2021 flu season. There was one confirmed influenza death in Hawai'i between Sept. 27, 2020 and Oct. 2, 2021. This is compared to 608 COVID-19 deaths in the same reporting period. While influenza deaths have been rare in the past season, the upcoming season is a big unknown. If mitigation measures are loosened as COVID cases come down, it is likely we will see some resurgence of flu and other respiratory diseases."

"DOH strongly recommends that all eligible individuals get vaccinated against both flu and COVID-19. It is safe to receive both vaccinations at the same time. Getting the flu shot will help to ensure that Hawai'i's flu rates remain low to protect our hospital capacity and keep our communities healthy."

Pneumonia and influenza related mortality data referenced in DOH's [Influenza/Respiratory Disease Surveillance Report](#) is an aggregate of pneumonia caused by all infectious agents, including flu and COVID-19.

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